

ML BULLETIN

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RED RIDING HOOD REVISITED

By Leora Wood Wells

With Special Thanks to David Henry

Regular readers of the ML Bulletin will recall Dick Balzer's article in the September, 1980 issue about the several variations of the Red Riding Hood story represented by slides in his collection. In some, Dick reported, the wolf is captured and delivered to a wild beast show. In others, the wolf is killed by a hunter and pushed down a well, while a resuscitated grandmother miraculously reappears and sits down happily to share a meal with RRH and the hunter.

We reported, as well, that one of our own sets (Wells has a slide showing the wolf unaccountably unconscious in the bed, with RRH (even more unaccountably) sitting on his stomach and talking calmly to the hunter.

Responding to Dick's and the Bulletin's requests for readings and/or information about how other people's RRH slide sets end, one of our British members, David Henry, supplied two complete lantern lectures plus a summary of the Grimm Brothers' version of the tale. These both add to the confusion and clarify some of it.

One of the readings has the wolf chomping up the grandmother and ending up in a wild beast show, as he does in some of Dick's slides, while Red Riding Hood is rewarded for her indiscretions by being given the money the show manager has payed to purchase the wolf. Woobly morality, that!

The second reading accords better with my own childhood memory of the story and Dick's recollection of the attached moral lesson. It ends like the reading Dick quoted, with a pious statement about what a severe lesson this was for RRH and how she was ever after "strict and particular" in what she did.

The Grimm Brothers' version (grim, indeed!) apparently explains why RRH is seen sitting placidly on the wolf's stomach in the Wells' set, and why she and the grandmother both appear unharmed in the last slide in some sets. David says that Iona and Peter Opie, in The Classic Fairy Tales, report that in the Grimm version, the wolf manages to consume both the grandmother and RRH. Then:

The wolf, replete after its dinner of of grandmother and little girl, falls asleep. A huntsman passing by hears the wolf's thunderous snores, goes into the house, sees the wolf in bed, guesses what has happened, and rips open the wolf's stomach with a pair of scissors. Out jumps the little girl ('How dark it was inside the Wolf!'), followed by the exhausted but otherwise unharmed grandmother, and the wolf is then dispatched.

My own research has unearthed some additional information. The Brothers Grimm, Jacob, (1785-1863) and Wilhelm (1786-1859) were German philologists who collaborated in writing numerous scholarly works. Their interest in preserving both the language and the substance of old folk and fairy tales led them to put in written form tales told them by peasants who had, in turn, been told them by earlier generations of story tellers--each of whom had embroidered, simplified or otherwise altered the tale to his or her own taste. "Little Red Riding Hood" was one of the tales included in their book of Children's and Household Tales, published in 1812.

However, printed as well as oral versions of the story had already been known in several countries for more than a century. Charles Perrault (1628-1803), was a distinguished member of the French Academy and assistant superintendant of public works during the reign of Louis XIV. He was also fond of children. In 1697, he published Tales of Times Past, a collection of fairytales told by a nursemaid to amuse Perrault's young son. Perrault's version of Little Red Riding Hood ends abruptly with RRH sharing her grandmother's fate: the wicked wolf gobbles her up. No noble huntsman comes to the rescue.

Each of Perrault's tales has a tidy moral tacked onto it. This one, in S.R. Littlewood's 1912 English translation, begins:

Little girls, this seems to say,
Never stop upon your way;
Never trust a stranger-friend;
No one knows how it will end.

The Red Riding Hood Story, like other folk and fairy tales, undoubtedly originated generations before the Perrault version appeared in print, for people have been storytellers as long as language has existed, and the classic theme of innocence imperilled by beastiality is as ancient as the human race itself. What we see in our various versions of magic lantern slide stories are 19th century interpretations of tales reflecting the value systems and literary styles of many authors and many storytellers of many generations.



Left: woodcut of the wolf and Red Riding Hood's grandmother, copied from an illustration in Perrault's 1697 version of the story.

WHEN IS A PROJECTOR NOT A MAGIC LANTERN?
By James P. Flanagan, Sr.

When Society member Ed Lennert raised this question, my curiosity was piqued, and I decided to try to pin down some clarifying definitions. My own assumption was that a magic lantern was a device consisting of a box containing an illuminant so arranged that rays from it passed through a transparent image which it projected some distance so that it appeared, enlarged, upon a screen.

The National Encyclopedia (P.F. Collier & Co., N.Y., 1933) gave a definition which seemed to support my assumption:

A magic lantern is an optical instrument for projecting an image on a screen. It consists of a source of light, properly enclosed, part of whose rays fall upon a powerful condensing lens which makes the light convergent. The light then passes through the "slide" or transparent picture to be projected, and then through a system of lenses which finally produce a greatly enlarged image on a screen placed at some distance.

Webster's 1956 edition of the New Twentieth Century Dictionary, however, confused me a bit. It defined the magic lantern as:

A kind of lantern by means of which small images are represented on the wall of a dark room or on a white sheet, magnified to any size at pleasure. It consists of a closed lantern or box, in which are placed a lamp and a concave mirror which

reflects the light of the lamp through a small hole of a tube in the side of the lantern, which is made to draw out. Various strips of glass with transparent pictures are placed between two lenses inside the lantern and then thrown by the light in a magnified form on the wall.

This garbled definition (which, among other things neglects to mention that the "tube" contains a focusing lens, and somehow places the slide inside the lantern) stipulates that transparent slides are used. Yet it was illustrated not by a picture of a magic lantern designed for glass slides but by a picture of the type of opaque projector commonly called a "post card projector."

I have several of these. One is a "Radioptican", made by a H.C. White Company, North Bennington, Vermont. It is illuminated by two electric bulbs with full reflectors. These are located at the front of the box, one on either side of the lens. The light from the bulbs reflects off of postcards placed in a double card holder attached to the rear of the box and projects the image through the lens onto the screen. The "Mirrorscope" made by the Buckeye Stereoptican Company of Cleveland, Ohio, is the same type. The "Keystone Pictograph," made by the Keystone Manufacturing Company of Boston, Massachusetts, is also illuminated by two electric light bulbs, but it has a single card holder in the bottom and uses a mirror at the top to reflect the image through the lens.

Having discovered that Webster seemed to imply that "magic lantern" and "opaque projector" were synonymous, I next decided to see what light earlier writers could shed upon the question. I knew the Jesuit priest, Athanasius Kircher (1601?-1680) is often credited with invention of the lantern and had described many optical experiments in his Ars Magna Lucia et Umbrae (Rome 1646 and Amsterdam 1671). In T.C. Hepworth's Book of the Lantern (Edward W. Wilson, N.Y., 1889) I found an interesting discussion of one of the illustrations from Kircher's book (see illustration). This simple device projects an inverted image through a pinhole in a divider between the image of a human face and the opposite wall.

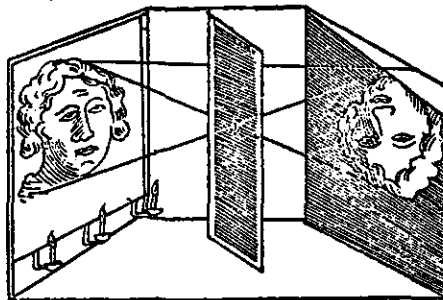


FIG. 1.

It will be seen, Hepworth wrote,

..that the design to be projected by the lens is illuminated by three candles--the brightest form of artificial light then known--and an inverted image is thrown upon a screen at a distance. Here we have practically the germ of the Aphengescope, or opaque form of lantern.

In Optical Projection (Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1891), Lewis Wright refers to the Aphengescope as a simple instrument for exhibiting cartes de visites and other opaque objects such as the inner works of a watch. The illustration shows two conjoined boxes. One contains the opaque image and the lens, and the other, set at an angle, contains the lights which reflect off the image. The implication seemed to be that both Hepworth and Wright did consider opaque projectors to be forms of the magic lantern.

The description given by Sir David Brewster (1781-1868), a Scottish physician known for his optical researches, emphasizes the use of transparent slides. In his Letters on Natural Magic (John Murray, London, 1834 and Harper Brothers, N.Y. 1838), Brewster gives this definition:

The magic lantern consists of a dark lantern containing a lamp and a concave metallic mirror, and it is so constructed that when the lamp is lighted, not a ray of light is able to escape from it. Into the side of the lantern is fitted a double tube, the outer half of which is capable of moving within the other half. A large piano convex lens is fixed at the inner end of the double tube and a small convex lens at the outer end, and to the fixed tube is joined a groove in which the sliders containing the painted objects are placed and through which they can be moved. Each slider contains a series of figures or pictures painted on glass with highly transparent colours. The direct light of the lamp, and the light reflected from the mirror, falling upon the illuminating lens, is concentrated by it so as to throw a brilliant light upon the painting on the slider, and as the painting is in the conjugate focus of the convex lens, a magnified image of it will be formed on a white wall or white cloth.

If we accept the idea that both lanterns using transparent slides and opaque projectors qualify as magic lanterns, what about movie projectors? I went back to Webster's Dictionary. It gave these definitions:

Motion picture camera: a camera which takes a series of pictures with slight changes of position of the objects in each succeeding photograph, to be shown by a motion picture projector.

Motion picture projector: a projecting machine which shows motion pictures in rapid succession, providing the visual effect of a continuous picture of moving objects.

Motion pictures are, of course, projected through the use of transparent film, first developed in 1889. Suspecting my answer will be attacked as arbitrary, I suggest that projectors using film to show pictures in rapid succession to produce the visual effect of moving objects over an extended period of time should be classified as motion picture projectors, not as magic lanterns. I realize the definition is still in dispute, but think this distinction may be useful to magic lantern hobbyists.

EIDTOR'S NOTE: Readers who wish to pursue the maze of definitions further are referred to "The Magic Lantern Defined," ML Bulletin Vol II, #2, July 1980, and "What is a Magic Lantern," ML Bulletin Vol I #3, Oct. 1979. As we said in those articles, there are so many definitions of the magic lantern that it seems our criterion can only be the one Lewis Carroll proposed to define another word in Through the Looking Glass: "When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said to Alice in a rather scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean--neither more nor less." We wonder how Jim would classify some of the projectors in our collection which project both typical glass magic lantern slices and continuous action film?

The "inverted face" illustration Jim refers to, which Hepworth correctly identified as a forerunner of the opaque projector is, of course, a stylized diagram of the optical principles of a camera obscura. This device had existed in various primitive forms since the fourth century B. C. in Greece. The first written description of it is generally acknowledged to be that of Leonardo da Vinci in his Treatise on Painting, written about 1515 and finally published in 1651.

Simply stated, a camera obscura is an enclosed box or chamber with an aperture on one side through which an inverted image of an object outside is projected upon the opposite wall within the darkened chamber. The image remained inverted until invention of certain types of lenses made it possible to project upright images.

Was the camera obscura a magic lantern? Not really. But it was probably the lantern's most important forerunner.

THE MAGIC LANTERN AND THE PASSING SHOW
by Leora Wood Wells

In this era when the very definition of the magic lantern seems unclear, it is difficult to realize how pervasive knowledge of this optical device was in earlier generations. During the 19th century, it was known to the intellectual elite, to the common people who crowded into Town Hall on Saturday night, to rowdy prospectors who gathered under Western stars to watch slides projected against the side of the peddler's wagon, to children in the nursery who joyfully awaited Papa's coming because of the wonderful show he would soon provide. "Magic lantern" was as common a part of the daily vocabulary as refrigerator, automobile, airplane and television are today. It was a generic term, expansive in its meaning, yet precise enough to convey the underlying concept it represented.

Writers frequently used the term in a figurative sense to establish a sort of "Grand Hotel" or "passing show" implication. Marguerite, Countess of Blessington, introduced her best known book, The Magic Lantern, or Sketches of Scenes in the Metropolis (London, 1823) with an anonymous couplet:

My magic lantern holds to view
Of fools, a crown; of wise, but few.

In a letter to an American friend, Charles Dickens put the city in a similar context, and credited its ever-changing panorama of quick impressions with being a major stimulator of his creative powers:

I cannot express how much I want..
streets, and numbers of figures..
For a week or a fortnight I can
write prodigiously, a day in London
setting and starting me up again.
But the toil and labor of writing day
after day without that magic lantern
is immense.

The political scene also struck writers, as it does today, as a "good show." A Portuguese journal of comic political commentary and cartoons, published in 1875, was called The Magic Lantern and featured a small, square lantern with "piecrust" chimney on its masthead. Nearly a century later, during a major political crisis, Washington Post columnist George Dixon reported that he had followed every development "until the final magic lantern slide was shown."

Writers have often turned to magic lantern-related terms to describe how people perceive each other. In The Blithedale Romance (1852), Nathaniel Hawthorne's recreation of the Brook Farm community, the author was eager to assure readers that the story, though based on fact, was fictional. In the preface he says:

(The author's) present concern..
is merely to establish a theatre, a
little removed from the highway of
ordinary travel, where the creatures
of his brain may play their phantasmagorical
antics without exposing them to too close
a comparison with the actual events of
real lives.

Writers have always recognized that these "antics" presented in fictional form, often reveal human character as a deeper level of truth than the mundane encounters of real life, just as magic lantern slides often reveal scenes more colorful and exciting than reality. "F.E.F.," who wrote for Graham's Magazine, could not resist a pun in the title of a short story in the March, 1848 issue. It was called, "Dissolving Views, or a Belle in a New Light."

In it, two highly bred sisters are distressed by their brother's infatuation with a girl of a lower social class. Their other brother suggests that to destroy the romance, all they need do is invite the young lady to an elegant ball:

If Harry saw Miss Dawson among young ladies of a different style and stamp, the changes of the "dissolving view" would not be greater. The present picture would fade away, and a new, and in all probability a very different one, would take its place.

The scheme works:

Never was a "dissolving view" more perfect. Harry had really imagined Miss Dawson not only to be beautiful, but thought she would grace any drawing room in Europe. He now saw her hoydenish, flirty, and ungraceful, with beauty of a very unrefined style--in fact, a different person...The spell was broken.

Many writers have been fascinated with the notion that everyone carries his own "magic lantern" about in his own head and has only to observe the "passing show" it provides to gain new insights. In an essay significantly called "Phantasmagoria," (Grahams Magazine, May, 1848) John Neal advises:

Every human being with his eyes about him, has, under all circumstances, and at all times, within his reach, and subject to his order, a heap of amusement, a whole treasury of unappropriated wisdom...If you will but place yourself at an open window...and watch the clouds that are now drifting, as before a strong wind, over the driest and busiest thoroughfares of your crowded city; changing from shadow to sunshine, and from sunshine to shadow, every uplifted countenance over which they pass, you will find yourself at the very next breath a wiser, a better, and a happier man.

In "A Visit" (Graham's Magazine, Sept. 1852), Frederika Bremer brilliantly evokes one of those breathtakingly lovely days that make one want to reach out and embrace the whole world, to stretch one's imagination, to hold brilliant conversations. But she has been ill, and is alone in the house. The best she can do is stand at her window, hoping a friend will come by. Time passes; no one comes.

Again I paced the carpets of the drawing room. No matter: it was yet good time for visiting, it was early yet, and a visit I should certainly have that night; and many a face passed in the camera obscura of my mind--many a vision of my expected visitor.

Oliver Wendell Holmes also uses the camera obscura analogy (The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table, 1858, 1891). A man only falls in love with a particular woman, he says, when he singles her out from the crowd and focuses on her, and her alone, in his "mental camera obscura."

Holmes applies his "mental optics" analogies again in this passage in the same book:

A great calamity...stains backward through all the leaves we have turned over in the book of life... For this we seem to have lived; it was foreshadowed in dreams that we leaped out of in a cold sweat of terror; in the "dissolving views" of dark day-visions; all omens pointed to it; all paths led to it.

The similarity between sleep apparitions and magic lantern projections is noted numerous times in literature. In his work of dreams, Georges Louis Leclerc, comte de Buffon (1707-1788) described what happens as one lies half way between waking and sleep:

Then is the time for chimerical images and flitting shadows. If we are in full health, the images are agreeable, the illusions are charming; but if the body is disordered or oppressed, then we see grim and hideous phantoms, which succeed each other in a manner not more whimsical than rapid. It is a magic lanthorn, a scene of chimeras, which fill the brain, when destitute of other sensations.

In Memories, Dreams, Reflections, Swiss psychiatrist Carl Gustave Jung (1875-1961) reported that in a half conscious state after suffering a heart attack, he experienced deliriums and visions in which "the whole phantasmagoria of earthly existence fell away or was stripped from me --an extremely painful experience."

Many years later, in a dream, he saw several lens-shaped UFO's hurtling toward him. Then another object came speeding through the air:

...a lens with a metallic extension which led to a box--a magic lantern. At a distance of sixty or seventy yards it stood still in the air, pointing straight at me. I awoke with a sense of astonishment...The thought passed through my head, "We always think that the UFO's are projections of ours. Now it turns out that we are their projections. I am projected by the magic lantern as C.G. Jung. But who manipulates the apparatus?"

The use of magic lantern-related terms by such diverse authors over such a long span of time tells us not only how widely known magic lanterns were, but also that by their very nature, they touch a deeply responsive chord in people. They can project a world that terrifies us or one as we would like it to be. They can symbolize how we perceive each other. And perhaps, as Jung implied, they can even tell us something about ourselves.

REBINDING GLASS SLIDES

By James P. Flanagan, Sr.

Should you wish to rebind some of your glass slides, you may find the following instructions helpful. They appear in John A. Tennant's The Photominiature, Volume I #9, Tennant and Ward, N.Y., December 1899.

Binding is one of these "little things" which so often cause trouble. A binding strip is a piece of paper about 1/3 inch wide and 16 inches long, well-gummed on one side. The trouble with some binding strips is that they will not adhere to the glass but persist in sooner or later drying off. One strip that works quite satisfactorily is the "Model"; or home-made strips may be made by coating needle-paper with thin glue.

The secret of good sticking is to have the strip thoroughly limp with water. Lay the damp strip on the table, and take the slide and cover-glass between the finger and thumb. Press one edge down firmly along the center of the strip of paper. The paper will adhere to the glass and may now be raised from the table. About 1/8 inch breadth of paper will overlap each side of the slide, and this must be pressed firmly down with the finger and thumb of the other hand.

As soon as the paper adheres along one edge, bend it carefully around the corner. Rub the finger and thumb repeatedly along each edge. When all four sides of the slide are bound, tear or cut off the inch of binding strip which is left, and put the slide away to set.

To facilitate this binding, there is a little vise known as a "lantern-slide-binder" in which two glasses are firmly grasped by two revolvable clamps. This allows the use of both hands in fixing the strips. A useful wrinkle in binding--for which I am indebted to Andrew Pringle--is to bind with some thin, tough, porous paper, such as tissue-paper, and afterwards dip the edges of the slide into a shellac varnish.

I have a lantern slide binder which reduces the time required to bind slides by about 75 percent. Even so, the entire procedure is somewhat painful.

Gummed binding paper 3/4 inch wide, called "filmoplast," can be purchased from Light Impressions, 131 Gould Street, Rochester, N.Y. 14610. Both transparent and opaque filmoplast is available. These products are manufactured in Germany and do a good job, although the cardboard dispenser is not very satisfactory. Three-quarter inch archival framing tape can also be used.

KOCH'S CORNER: THE CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

August National Meeting. Registrations are coming in much more slowly than anticipated. If we cannot guarantee adequate attendance, the whole plan may collapse. We realize travel costs are extremely high, and that some of you will be out of the country, on vacation in distant locations, or bound by other obligations you can't reschedule, but we do urge you to let Ed Lennert or myself know as quickly as possible if you will be able to attend. We must make a final decision within a few weeks. Several of our British members plan to attend. Should U.S. members do less?

Membership. The renewal rate on memberships is disappointing. Quite a few have dropped out for various reasons, but fortunately this loss is counter-balanced by an influx of new members, several of whom have generously contributed items for the Bulletin. This bodes well for the future, as we need members who are actively interested and do their part.

By-Laws. All of you have received the preliminary By-Laws developed by Bob Bishop. These contain some oversights which will need to be corrected in the interests of smoother functioning, but Bob felt it was important to get the ball rolling toward a more organized society. Bob reports that he received 27 replies to his December questionnaire, some of them representing the thinking of more than one individual. Bob asked 8 of those who replied for further comments: David Brooke, Ralph Eiper, Jim Flanagan, Robert Fleshman, Ira Franklin, Blanche Owens, George Reed and Robert Scherer. His draft reflected the views expressed in response to the questionnaire, the more detailed comments of these members, and a lot of hard work on Bob's part. Several other members have also offered suggestions which may be incorporated at a later time. Developing a workable system for an organization as scattered as ours is an extremely difficult task. I'm sure all of us appreciate the efforts of Bob and these other members.

Bulletin. If any of you wonder why its publication date is so erratic, that is due to a combination of factors. Assembling the material for it is a time consuming task which our Editor has to sandwich in between obligations to her regular work. Then, to keep costs down, it must go through a complicated series of cross-country moves to be typed, xeroxed, addressed and distributed. It would be great for all of us if we could get the mechanical aspects of publication done the fastest and easiest way. But as you know, membership dues are the Society's only source of income. Even with many, many hours of work donated by several members, each issue is extremely costly, and rising postage rates are making it even more difficult for us to keep afloat.

Successful Sale. David Coffeen reports that his sale of magic lanterns and slides was very successful, and he is particularly pleased that the two biunal outfits went to private collectors who will really appreciate and care for them.

Glad to Learn About Sales. One of our newer members has written to tell us how delighted she is to learn about items other members have for sale. Even if the items are not ones she wants to buy, the lists are very informative, she says, and add to her knowledge of lanterns and slides.

A Simple Matter of Courtesy. One of our members has expressed great disappointment at the lack of response from other members with whom he has attempted to establish correspondence. Having written 8 members he felt had interests similar to his own, he received responses from only 3. I know other members of the Society--including our Editor, who often receives no replies to requests for articles directly related to the member's own interests--are annoyed by this unresponsiveness. In defense of the non-responders, I must point out that many of our members have very time consuming jobs which allow little time for correspondence. Even so, it takes only a few minutes for a courteous reply, even if all it says is, "Sorry, I'd love to correspond but I just can't manage it right now." Please try to do at least that much, and when you can, offer additional information or comments. The Bulletin and personal contacts are the only ways we have to share each other's magic lantern interests, and that's what the Society is really all about.

Everything's Up To Date In Kansas City. Alice and I were watching "Oklahoma" on television recently. In that wonderful Kansas City song, there's a great line: "It's even better than a MAGIC LANTERN SHOW."

NOTES FROM HERE AND THERE: THE EDITOR'S SCRAPBOOK

List of Makers and Distributors. Nancy Bergh reports that she has received information from several of you and now has about 200 makers and/or distributors of lanterns and/or slides in her card file. She will type these up for distribution to Society members within the next few months but would greatly appreciate additional information, especially regarding dates various companies were in business and successive business locations. Many m.l. books have ads in the back, and the publication dates of the books yield important clues. So do ads in magazines. For example, the 1875 issues of the American Agriculturalist magazine contain McAllister ads for magic lanterns and list the business address as 49 Nassau Street, New York. Youth's Companion for December 1890 shows McAllister still at the same address, as does the 1914 edition of Gage's Optic Projection.

However, O.B. and George Kleine, Chicago opticians, did not remain at the same address the whole time they were in business. An 1894 catalogue listed them at 76 Washington Street and referred to the company's "30 years experience in construction of magic lanterns." By 1906, Kleine was taking out patents on an improved duplex dissolving stereopticon and had moved to 52 State Street in Chicago.

Riley Brothers, makers of optical lanterns and slides, was an international firm. The Century's Progress, and 1893 report on industry and commerce in Yorkshire, England, lists Riley Brothers at 5 Cheapside, Bradford, Yorkshire, while The Pictorial Photographer and Developer of Oct. 15, 1897, published in New York, lists Riley Brothers at 16 Beekman Street, NYC, and the Optical Magic Lantern Journal and Photographic Enlarger of Sept. 1897 gives the company's English address at 55 & 57 Godwin Street, Bradford, England.

The point is, there's much more information on makers and distributors than meets the eye at first glance. Why don't all of you spend an evening browsing through you m.l. references and see how many facts about each maker you can gather for Nancy to add to her list?

Slide Show Techniques. Society member Jim Flanagan is accumulating tips for an article on the mechanics of giving m.l. slide shows, manipulating slides, selecting appropriate materials for inclusion, etc. Information can be from old publications or based on personal experience as lanternists. Jim will welcome information from any and all of you. Please respond.

Research Project Seeks Motion Picture Catalogs. Some or all of you may have received a request from Reese V. Jenkins, Director and Editor of the Thomas A. Edison Papers, for access to any motion picture publishers' catalogs for the period 1890-1908. The project is collecting these rare and important catalogs with the intention of publishing them on microfilm. The project is jointly sponsored by Rutgers University, the National Park Service, the Smithsonian Institution and the New Jersey Historical Commission and is supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. If any of you have Edison or non-Edison catalogs, please write Dr. Jenkins at 1 Richardson Street, New Brunswick, N.J. 08903 or phone him at (201) 932-8511.

ML Article. Special thanks this month go to Professor Robert Woodward of San Jose, California, who supplied the article on "The Magic Lantern in Literature" for our last issue. This time, our appreciation is for his article on the ML Society which appeared in the March issue of The Collector. This monthly tabloid has a circulation of more than 100,000--the largest in its field. In addition to special articles, Woodward provides a regular column of bits and pieces of information about many areas of collecting. In case any of you wish to subscribe, the address of the magazine is Drawer C, Kermit, Texas 79745, and an annual subscription is \$20.00.

More Thank You's. Gradually the flow of short items and full articles from members is beginning to pick up, and I want you to know these are appreciated. These make it possible for us to pool our knowledge, which benefits all of us. As you have probably noticed in reading this Bulletin, Jim Flanagan gets this month's Brownie Points for the most contributions by a member in a single issue.

Meeting of NW Group. Alice Koch, who serves valiantly as Secretary both of the National Society and of the Northwest Group, reports that the quarterly meeting of the NW Group was held March 15 at the Museum of History and Industry in Seattle, Washington. Eleven members and four guests attended, and by the end of the meeting, one of the guests had joined up and become a member. Dr. James Warren, Director of the Museum, described several aspects of the Museum's programs and conducted the members on a tour of its vast storage areas which house among other things, some 10,000 magic lantern slides. The meeting was open to the public, and presentation of a slide show on Alaska by Bud Kenneberg, a magic lantern show by Bob Bishop and a talk by Joe Koch on Philadelphia's magic lantern slide artist, Joseph Boggs Beale, attracted an audience of 75.

Paris in the Springtime. The typewriter gremlins garbled the January issue item about magic lanterns in Paris. In case you are planning to check them out any time soon, what the item was meant to say was that several lanterns are on display in the Musée du Cinema in the Trocadero, and that the Musée Pompidou features engravings of Zahn's 17th century lanterns in an exhibit on industrial design.

CAN YOU TELL ME?--QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT MAGIC LANTERNS

Q: Don't you hate nitpickers? I have only been a member of the Society for 2 weeks and must regretfully dispute a statement in the Jan.'81 Bulletin. It says, "The fact that your lantern is electric means that it dates from the 20th century." WRONG! My first lantern, the one that rekindled childhood memories and infected me with the BUG, is a Bausch & Lomb Model B Balopticon, serial #11655. This lantern is electric and was made in 1892. It has an Edison Mazda Lamp with the evacuation tip on the top of the bulb. Perhaps this information will help other members date their own Balopticons. Bob Skell

A: Nope! I like constructive nitpickers who back up their picking with accurate, useful information, as you have done. Balopticons are no longer made, but any members who have such projectors may wish to write Bausch & Lomb, 1400 N. Goodman St., Rochester, N.Y. 24602, for literature about them. Or write to Bob (see MEMBERSHIP UPDATE in this issue) about any specific questions you may have on Balopticons.

For many excellent photographs of Balopticons, See Optic Projection by Simon Henry Gage, Comstock Publishing Co., Ithaca, N.Y. 1914.

Q: I have yet to find anyone in New Mexico who has ever seen a magic lantern. They must have been terrible unpopular out here! Why would that be? Barbara Cauthorn

A: This was probably an accident of history. Magic lanterns reached their peak of popularity in this country during the post-Civil War decades of the 19th century. At that time, New Mexico was still a sparsely populated territory of people pretty much preoccupied with fighting off attacks by Indians and rival cattlemen, trying to find ways to make a living, and trying to gain Statehood. More lanterns probably found their way to more populous areas of the West, such as California, where both the arts and the diverse worlds of entertainment got an early start during the economic boom years of the Gold Rush.

Q: We have an E.P. Gloria lantern model #7001 or 1001 in its original box. It is complete except for the kerosene lamp. This is a family curiosity which we use at Christmas time and Historical Society meetings. Is it possible to purchase a replacement lamp perhaps from your members? Can you estimate the value of this lantern? Mrs. James W. Mitchell, 813 West Main Street, Eaton, Ohio 45320

A: Any members who have spare EP lamps and are willing to sell them, please get in touch with Mrs. Mitchell.

Magic lanterns made by Ernst Plank of Nuremberg, Germany, were extremely popular in this country in the late 19th and early 20th century, and the Gloria was the "top of the line." It came in several sizes. As to its current value, we hesitate to give estimates, as prices vary greatly in different parts of the country. Your best way of finding out is to visit several antique shops and shows in your area and see at what price comparable lanterns are being offered.

It's nice to know that you and your family still use and enjoy this lantern. As our members can testify, these lanterns do have a special magic that leads their owners into all kinds of adventures.

Q: The attached illustration of a barrel-shaped magic lantern is from Kircher's book. This appears to be the lantern Quigley refers to in Magic Shadows, when he says, "The first form of lantern described by Kircher was merely a lantern suitable for showing letters at a remote distance...The parts are easily distinguished--a concave mirror at the rear, a candle for a light source; a handle and a place for inserting silhouette letter slides." I cannot distinguish a slide location in the drawing. Might the letter have been painted on the lens? Jim Flanagan

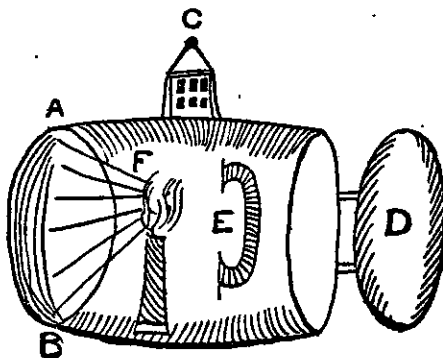


FIG. 2.

A: According to "A Practiced Hand," the anonymous author of The Magic Lantern: Its Construction and Management, (Ward, Lock & Co., London & N.Y. 1888), Kircher interpreted this drawing as follows: AB is the concave reflector. F is the light source, and C is the chimney. E is the handle. D is a double convex lens "between which and the end of the lantern is the aperture for the insertion of the slides." This form of the lantern, according to this author, was in use before Kircher's time, and he merely described it.

One thing that confuses many people about the drawings in Kircher's and other early books is the primitive perspective and the fact that they are closer to symbolic diagrams than to realistic drawings. If taken too literally, they become impossible to understand. Why don't you try constructing a model of this lantern out of a tomato juice can, a smaller can shaped and pierced to serve as a heat vent, a reflector and a double convex lens with some sort of support and see if it works when you insert a glass slide? But don't burn yourself; that tin can will be hot! Let us know your results.

BUY/SELL/TRADE

- . Unusual Request. One of our Canadian members, audio-visual specialist Don Spiegel, has an unusually specialized interest. "I've kind of slid from collecting lanterns to collecting oil lamps used in lanterns," he says. Since Vancouver, where Don lives, is too young a city to provide good collecting opportunities, Don hopes Society members may have surplus lamps for sale. Don's address is on your membership list.
- . For Sale or Trade (interested in "Keystone" slides and old phonographs and radios):
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 - 2) Bausch & Lomb Opaque Projector, serial number 60502.
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